



# FACT SHEET

## Illegal dumps in Kentucky

A drive through Kentucky reveals diverse scenic beauty -- hills and hollows in Eastern Kentucky, rolling fields and well-kept horse farms in Central Kentucky, and lakes and flatlands in Western Kentucky.

Unfortunately there's a good chance you may also see an illegal dumpsite. These blights on the Bluegrass State are ugly, dangerous and expensive to clean up. Dumps don't have the protective controls of a landfill and are dangerous to the environment and human health. They are breeding grounds for rats, flies, mosquitoes and other disease-carrying creatures. When burned, dumps can poison the air with toxic fumes from tires, plastics and other household waste.



It costs a lot of money to clean up a dump. More than 23,500 illegal dumps have been cleaned up in Kentucky since 1993 at a cost of more than \$59.7 million. Counties continue to have the responsibility of cleaning up illegal dumps, preventing their recurrence and issuing citations. However, the state Division of Waste Management does offer assistance on a couple of fronts:

**Kentucky Pride Fund grants.** The fund was created by the 2002 General Assembly to collect a \$1.75 environmental remediation fee for each ton of garbage disposed at Kentucky municipal solid waste facilities. In 2008 more than \$2.9 million in grants from the fund were awarded for cleanup of 293 illegal dumps in 52 counties.

**Enforcement activities.** Division field inspectors and special investigators locate dumps and gather evidence using stakeouts and surveillance equipment. An offender will be issued a notice of violation and given the option of cleaning up the site within two weeks and signing up for a collection service or appearing before an administrative hearing officer in Frankfort. The hearing officer will determine the penalty, which could be up to \$5,000 per day.

### What you can do

- ✓ Subscribe to a collection service and encourage others to sign up also.
- ✓ Report open dumps.

**Be safe.** If you witness open dumping or know a dump location, don't confront a suspected lawbreaker or take any action that would place you in harm's way. Contact your county solid waste coordinator (see list online at <http://www.waste.ky.gov/branches/rla/County+Solid+Waste+Coordinators.htm>) or county judge-executive. Or you can call the division's toll-free number (888 NO-DUMPS) or e-mail [waste.ky.gov](mailto:waste.ky.gov). Provide detailed information on the time and date of the incident, the address or location of the dump, vehicle description and type of materials dumped.

Art courtesy of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

## Division of Waste Management

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